



# ***Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks***

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Big Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited  
Box 1  
Ovando, MT

Subject: Comment on Future Fisheries applications

Ryen,

Thanks for the providing the Future Fisheries applications. As you know, I am supportive of any meaningful project that offset adverse human activities to the benefit to native trout. My comments regarding the Pearson, S.F. Poorman and Klondike grant applications are as follows:

## Pearson Creek.

Pearson Creek is a high priority and a very beneficial project to the Blackfoot River. The sportsman benefits to this project relate to the conservation value of westslope cutthroat trout in the Chamberlain Creek basin and recruitment potential of westslope cutthroat trout to the Blackfoot River. To this end, FWP has made a multi-million dollar investment in securing habitat protection in the headwaters of the Pearson/Chamberlain Creek drainage using Native Trout Habitat Conservation (HCP) Funds. The Pearson Creek project will help ensure the HCP project meets its goals of cutthroat conservation. A significant outcome of this endeavor are landowner-donated water leases on both Chamberlain and Pearson Creek. This contribution and related restoration work has restored Chamberlain Creek to the most productive spawning stream within the Blackfoot. Pearson Creek has great potential for a similar response through restoration.

## South Fork of Poorman

Like Pearson Creek, the South Fork of Poorman Creek is a high priority restoration stream. However, this priority status relates primarily to bull trout recovery. Poorman Creek is the only stream in Blackfoot drainage south of the Blackfoot River to support bull trout reproduction. As "critical" bull trout habitat, FWP and many other cooperators have made a long-term investment in the drainage in order to restore habitat and connectivity for bull trout and cutthroat trout. This project will help ensure continued progress. Within this context, we are fortunate that major initiative the *Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program* allows for landscape-level improvements to

aquatic habitats on the Helena National Forest. I hope Future Fisheries recognizes the benefits of engaging in such a large-scale and forward-looking projects.

### Klondike Creek

Unlike Pearson and Poorman Creeks, FWP has no fisheries data on Klondike Creek. As such, it is difficult to comment on the resource values and potential benefits of the project. That said, we recognized the stream supports genetically pure westslope cutthroat trout, as well as the biological impacts hydraulically undersized culverts can impose on local fisheries. It is also important to work with the Helena National Forest and specifically the *Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program* in order to help address landscape-level aquatic impacts involving bad roads and bad culvert crossings.

Sincerely,

Ron Pierce  
Fisheries Biologist  
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cc: Mark Lere